



*Chosen to Lead DSHS in  
Washington's Welfare Reform*

Meet  
**Deborah Marley**

**“ Washington’s  
welfare reform  
model has enabled  
thousands to find  
employment.”**

**DEBORAH MARLEY**  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY  
ECONOMIC SERVICES  
ADMINISTRATION

Deborah Marley, 49, came to Washington in 2003 from Iowa, where she served as administrator of that state’s Division of Financial, Health and Work Supports in the Department of Human Services. She was responsible for Medicaid and child care budgets of more than \$2 billion annually as well as \$400 million in financial and work support programs. She also implemented Iowa’s welfare reform program. She received the Governor’s Leader of the Year Award in 2001 and Governor’s State Top Achievement Recognition Award in 1995. She has worked for 26 years to help children in poverty and their parents have hopes and dreams and see that a better future is possible.

“I am honored to work in Washington’s Department of Social and Health Services,” Marley said. “This state has a proven record of success in helping people in need and lifting families and children out of poverty and into a better life.”

“The number of people on welfare in Washington is now at its lowest point in over 30 years, with slightly more than two percent of the population on welfare. The high performance bonuses awarded to Washington by the federal government underscore this state’s effectiveness in placing welfare recipients into jobs and helping them succeed once employed. Washington also leads the nation in providing low-income families with access to affordable child care.”

She also praised Washington for its high rank (ninth) in the nation for child support collections, paternity establishment and cost effectiveness.

**Marley said her top priorities for the Economic Services Administration (ESA) are:**

- Continuing the success of WorkFirst, the state’s welfare-to-work program,
- Breaking down barriers to greater coordination and integration of services that help low-income families and children.

Meet

**Deborah Marley** • *Chosen to Lead DSHS in Washington's Welfare Reform*

---

- Improving public access to ESA programs and services, which include Basic Food, Temporarily Assistance for Needy Families, child support, child care and early learning, and the operation of Community Services Offices throughout the state

**Key challenges facing Economic Services include:**

- A high number of Washington's children are living in poverty. Despite the gains made in helping people move from welfare to work, about a quarter-million children in this state live in poverty.
- Increasing need and demand for services during a time of fiscal austerity.
- Pending federal reauthorization of the welfare reform laws which could bring significant changes to WorkFirst.

**Economic Services Administration** • *Building Better Lives*

***Our Mission:***

To improve the resources and support that help people build better lives

***Our Vision:***

ESA programs and services reduce poverty and hunger, improve lives of those who turn to us for help, and build stronger, healthier families and communities across Washington State

***Our Focus:***

- Provide quality services to customers
- Appreciate and respect staff
- Value our partners
- Serve as good stewards